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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9592
INFO RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 4955
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 6083
RUEHNK/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT 3826
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 5152
RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA 4476
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0891

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 000079

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STATE FOR NEA/MAG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/22/2013
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [MO](#)
SUBJECT: MOI/WALI RESHUFFLE: SOME OLD GUARD OUT,
TECHNOCRATS IN

Classified By: PolCouns Craig Karp for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: King Mohammed VI reshuffled two dozen senior Ministry of Interior officials on January 22, in effect a long-delayed periodic rotation. The effective number 3 at the ministry, in charge of law enforcement and no friend of reform, was moved aside. The King also created some new provinces, including Sidi Ifni, a major demand of last year's protesters there. In general, it appears that the move was part of the decade-long process of consolidation of King Mohammed VI's rule, slowly moving out those who served the tainted regime of his father and bringing up technocrats or his own intimates. End summary.

¶2. (C) According to media of January 23, MOI former Chief law enforcement official Mohieddine Amzazi (a non-reformer, he was also our principal interlocutor in the human rights dialogue, and the subject of both allegations of corruption and rumors some months back of removal due to royal annoyance at the arrest of a blogger and some others) was given a position without responsibility at the Ministry, as was Laayoune Wali M'hamed Dryef--which often means they will just stay home. They were some of the last senior holdouts from the administration of Hassan II's enforcer Driss Basri, although Dryef, an urban planner had been a force for improving human rights in the Sahara. He earlier told us he wanted to return home to Rabat. We have no immediate insight on his replacement in Laayoune, Mohamed Jalmous, a former governor of a district near the home town of first friend El Himma. Jalmous will be dual-hatted as governor, which may presage some diminution of authority. The Deputy Permanent Representative of Morocco to the UN, Hamid Chabar, was named Wali of Dakhla, the more pro-Moroccan part of the Western Sahara; he formerly was a liaison with MINURSO.

¶3. (SBU) Consulate Casablanca reports the new Wali and Governor of the prefecture, Mohammed Halab, a former Wali of Tangier, is a known quantity in Morocco's metropolis for his dynamism, competence and vision. He has several new governors on his team.

¶4. (SBU) The King also created several prefectures/provinces including Sidi Ifni. This was a major demand of the Sidi Ifni protesters last year. Tarfaya, in the Sahrawi part of undisputed southern Morocco was also given provincial status. It is not clear if it has been moved out of Laayoune region.

¶5. (C) Comment: The rotation was long awaited, not the least by these and other senior officials, anxious to know their fate. Some appointments are yet to come. Walis are personal representatives of the King and, as such, have a status just below that of minister and authority akin to that of U.S.

state governors. They run regions and supervise the governors in the provinces under their regions. They play a significant role in setting the security and administrative tone of areas under their charge. At first glance this would appear to be part of the king's decade-long process of professionalizing the administration and moving out those with ties to the repressive days of his father's reign. Some are well known to him. It may then be another step in the slow but steady process of reform in Morocco. End Comment.

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